

**Media Contact:**

Alisa Valentin, (202) 418-2500

Alisa.Valentin@fcc.gov

**For Immediate Release****COMMISSIONER STARKS ANNOUNCES FUTURE OF WORK PANEL ON  
BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES AND THE DIGITAL DIVIDE**

WASHINGTON, February 8, 2021 — On Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 2 p.m. ET, FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks will virtually host *Future of Work: Black Owned Businesses and the Digital Divide*.

The continued fight for social justice and the COVID-19 pandemic has brought us an unparalleled opportunity to focus our efforts on the fundamental values of fairness and equity as we rebuild our economy and workforce for the future. This unprecedented crisis has also demonstrated that economic opportunity and access to affordable, reliable broadband are inextricably tied. The policies necessary to bridge the digital divide must center the most marginalized, including Black-owned businesses and Black workers who have been disproportionately impacted by the economic crisis.

This panel discussion will convene leaders from the African American Mayors Association, the Black Economic Alliance, the Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice, and U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. The event will be live streamed via WebEx. Attendees can access the event via [this link](#).

**Moderator:**

- Kim Tignor, Executive Director of the Institute for Intellectual Property and Social Justice

**Confirmed Panelists:**

- Ron Busby, President/CEO of the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc.
- Charles Phillips, Co-Founder & Co-Chair of the Black Economic Alliance
- Stephanie Sykes, Founding Executive Director and General Counsel of the African American Mayors Association

For additional information about the roundtable, please contact Alisa Valentin from the Office of FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks at (202) 418-2500 or [Alisa.Valentin@fcc.gov](mailto:Alisa.Valentin@fcc.gov).

**Office of Commissioner Geoffrey Starks: (202) 418-2500**  
**ASL Videophone: (844) 432-2275**  
**TTY: (888) 835-5322**  
**Twitter: @GeoffreyStarks**  
**[www.fcc.gov/about/leadership/geoffrey-starks](http://www.fcc.gov/about/leadership/geoffrey-starks)**

*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*